

# AFFIDAVIT OF BILLY JOE LORD

The following affidavit was executed by Billy Joe Lord on June 28, 1964.

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION  
ON THE ASSASSINATION OF  
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS,  
County of Travis, ss:

I, Billy Joe Lord, being duly sworn say:

1. I am an Airman Third Class in the United States Air Force, and I am in the 340th Bomb Wing, Combat Defense Squadron at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas. I am 22 years old and my parents live at Midland, Texas.

2. After graduating from Midland High School in 1959, with the financial assistance of my parents, I made plans to continue my education in France. During August, 1959, I made an application for a passport, and on or about September 13, 1959, I departed Midland, Texas via train for New Orleans, Louisiana, arriving there about September 17, 1959. I spent the next three days touring the city of New Orleans and making several trips to the ticket office of the Lykes Lines. The cost of passage aboard the ship S.S. Marion Lykes amounted to slightly more than \$200. I registered and stayed in the LaSalle Hotel on Canal Street, which was near the city library. I visited the library several times during this stay in the city. During this period I did not know Lee Harvey Oswald.

3. On September 20, 1959, I boarded the freighter S.S. Marion Lykes at New Orleans. Upon boarding the ship, I was shown to my room, and when I got there, Lee Harvey Oswald was already there and moving in. We were to share this room. I had never before seen nor heard of Lee Harvey Oswald. Lee Harvey Oswald and I shared this cabin for the duration of the trip to France which was fourteen days.

4. In our first conversation, Oswald said that he was recently discharged from the Marines and that he had worked in some technical field while in the Marines. He indicated that he was somewhat bitter about the fact that his mother had to work in a drugstore in Fort Worth, Texas, and was having a difficult time. He also said that he would probably return to the United States to work. He gave no indication of his ultimate destination, although he said he was going to travel around in Europe and possibly attend school in Switzerland if he had sufficient funds. Also in this first conversation, we discussed religion. I do not know why we discussed religion except that possibly he noticed that I had a Bible. Oswald maintained that he could not see how I could believe in God in view of the fact that science had disproved the existence of God, and that there was only matter.

5. After the first day, I hardly conversed with Oswald at all. Oswald was not outgoing and neither was I. We just were not very friendly.

6. Besides Oswald and myself, there were two other passengers aboard the ship. They were a retired U.S. Army Colonel and his wife, Colonel and Mrs. George B. Church, Jr. All four of the passengers generally ate their meals together in the ship's officer's mess. Oswald ate most of his meals with us. I do not recall Colonel Church and his wife associating very much with Lee Harvey Oswald.

7. I shared a closet with Oswald, but I did not notice anything out of the ordinary among Oswald's possessions. He did show me either his military identification card or his passport.

8. Oswald did not indicate that he might defect to Russia. To the best of my knowledge, Oswald did not receive any correspondence or communications while aboard the ship, nor did he associate with any of the ship's crew. Oswald never mentioned any contacts or friends in Europe.

9. Lee Harvey Oswald appeared to be a normal, healthy individual, mentally alert, but extremely cynical in his general attitude.

On October 5, 1959, our ship arrived in France, and I disembarked from the ship. I never saw or heard from him again. It is my recollection that he departed from the ship subsequent to my departure. I had written my mother about all the passengers. When Oswald defected, she sent me a newspaper clipping about it.

10. Oswald spent a great deal of his time during the trip on the deck. I do not recall him doing any reading. I do recall, however, that there was a radio speaker which received programs from Europe and that Oswald and Colonel Church seemed to understand a little bit of the foreign language that came over on the speaker. I thought it was German, but I am not sure.

11. I attended the Institute of French Studies at the City of Tours, Province of Touraine, France, from October, 1959 to February, 1962 intermittently while auditing courses at the University of Poitiers, Tours, France, and at the Sorbonne, University of Paris, France. I returned to the United States aboard the French ship, Liberty, in June, 1960. I went to France again in February of 1961 for further education, and returned to the United States in February of 1962.

Signed this 28th day of June 1964.

ENCLOSURE  
(8) Billy Joe Lord,  
BILLY JOE LORD

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 1/26/89 BY SP6  
Per CIA letter 9/23/88 b7c

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